

Office of Response and Restoration

Strategic Plan



OR&R VISION STATEMENT. Coastal resources are preserved for future generations because OR&R prevents damage to the environment, responds to incidents to minimize environmental harm, and restores degraded resources.

OR&R MISSION. Protect and restore coastal resources by countering and responding to environmental threats and promoting sound decision-making in the coastal zone.

Goal 1.0 PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS

Reduce risks to coastal habitats and resources from oil spills, hazardous material releases, and other activities that could degrade environmental quality.

Objective 1.1 Coordinate scientific input and provide expertise to develop elements of contingency plans and drills that identify the most beneficial actions during emergency response activities.

Objective 1.2 Lead at regional and local levels in identifying and characterizing risks to coastal resources and improving prevention, preparedness, and response through public-private partnerships and a cross-NOS regional approach.

Objective 1.3 Prepare for and respond to non-emergency events that affect coastal environmental quality (for example, coastal storms, energy-development activities, and port infrastructure development and maintenance activities).

Goal 2.0 PROTECTION AND RESPONSE

Protect coastal habitats and other resources from oil spills, hazardous material releases, and other activities that affect coastal environmental quality.

Objective 2.1 Coordinate on-scene scientific activities and provide scientific support for operational decisions during oil spills, hazardous material releases, and other emergencies with a highly trained and experienced cadre of technical experts.

Objective 2.2 Identify, prioritize, and characterize potential harm to coastal resources and habitats at risk from releases from hazardous waste sites and other contaminant problems.

Objective 2.3 Develop and promote actions that protect and enhance recovery of coastal natural resources.

Objective 2.3.1 Work with partners to promote actions to protect coastal natural resources from releases of hazardous materials.

Objective 2.3.2 Control contamination at NOAA facilities in the Pribilof Islands to protect human health, the environment, and natural resources.

Objective 2.4 Develop and promote long-term monitoring strategies that evaluate the effectiveness of cleanup and mitigation actions in protecting coastal resources.

Goal 3.0 RESTORATION

Restore coastal habitats and resources harmed by releases of oil, hazardous materials, and other activities that affect coastal environmental quality.

Objective 3.1 Achieve cooperative settlements with responsible parties that protect and restore coastal resources.

Objective 3.2 Conduct natural resource damage assessments so that those responsible for oil spills and hazardous material releases fund restoration of NOAA trust resources where cooperative settlements are not feasible.

Objective 3.3 Lead in developing national policy to improve effectiveness of restoration activities and expand the scale of restoration planning and implementation.

Objective 3.4 Encourage and promote regional restoration planning to maximize the benefits of restoration on a broader scale.

Objective 3.5 Improve restoration of coastal resources as part of dredging and port development activities, in brownfields communities, and in priority urban estuaries.

Objective 3.6 Develop, implement, and monitor projects to restore degraded coastal natural resources under CERCLA, CWA, and OPA authorities.

Objective 3.7 Link emergency response, assessment, and restoration activities so that responses anticipate and support more effective, less costly, longer-term recovery.

Goal 4.0 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Use research and development to improve response to oil spills, hazardous materials releases, and other activities that degrade coastal environmental quality.

Objective 4.1 Lead research and monitoring projects to investigate the environmental consequences of mitigation techniques, spill countermeasures, and remedial activities at spills and waste sites.

Objective 4.2 Develop and evaluate environmental investigation strategies and bioassessment techniques to better characterize potential injuries to coastal resources and habitats.

Objective 4.3 Improve theoretical and field techniques to predict, obtain, and evaluate data on physical, biological, and chemical processes related to pollutant distribution and behavior.

Objective 4.4 Conduct monitoring and research to improve restoration projects, with special emphasis on defining recovery of salt marsh, mudflat, and sea grass habitat.

Goal 5.0 DECISION SUPPORT AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Enhance NOS and its partners' capabilities to use complex information more effectively to make decisions regarding coastal environmental threats and to restore degraded natural resources.

Objective 5.1 Develop, improve, and deliver algorithms, databases, and mapping systems that support assessment, response, and restoration and allow simple access to complex information.

Objective 5.2 Develop and apply "value-added" products derived from NOS' navigation programs and other NOAA activities for spill prevention and response and coastal-resource management.

Objective 5.3 Provide guidance, conduct training, and support technology transfer to NOS clients and partners for prevention, preparedness, response, and restoration.

Objective 5.4 Work locally and regionally to promote NOAA's coastal stewardship mission through integrated decision support for NOS clients and partners.

Goal 6.0 INFRASTRUCTURE, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PERSONNEL

Maintain capabilities and adapt the OR&R organization to accomplish its mission within the changing political environment.

Objective 6.1 Maintain a cadre of in-house technical expertise to apply and transfer experience to existing and new environments.

Objective 6.1.1 Provide training and other employee-development opportunities to increase staff and Office performance.

Objective 6.1.2 Strengthen application of diversity principles in the workforce.

Objective 6.1.3 Provide opportunities for employees to participate in and guide Office directions.

Objective 6.1.4 Maintain and deploy a scientific support capability to respond to environmental threats in support of the Unified Command as mandated under the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan.

Objective 6.1.5 Maintain and deploy a rapid assessment capability to secure ephemeral data and samples needed to support natural resource damage assessments for oil spills and releases of hazardous materials.

Objective 6.2 Secure adequate funding for all OR&R programs.

Objective 6.3 Provide sufficient facilities and equipment to support programmatic requirements.

Objective 6.4 Maintain effective communications within and external to OR&R, including strong marketing and outreach programs.

Objective 6.5 Promote partnerships at all levels, both within and external to NOAA.

Objective 6.6 Leverage new legislative opportunities to support the effectiveness of OR&R programs.

Objective 6.7 Implement efficient cost-documentation processes, tools, and methods that meet the requirements of NOAA and other agencies, as appropriate.

